

Thomas P. Wilczak
301 Claremont
Dearborn, MI 48124

April 27, 2015

Via Email

The Honorable Rick Jones, Chairman
Senate Judiciary Committee
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, Michigan 48909 -7536

RE: SB 0004-Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA)

Dear Chairman Jones:

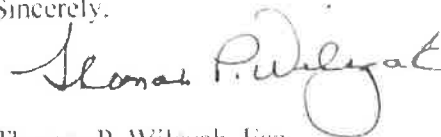
I am writing to let you know that I am strongly opposed to SB 0004, the Michigan Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) as currently written. Legislation granting business owners license to refuse service to people because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression is unacceptable in a civil society. For example, as a lawyer, I cannot imagine discriminating against a client or potential client in such a manner, nor, thankfully, would my firm tolerate it.

I am also concerned about the impact the RFRA will have on Michigan's image as a state where everyone is welcome to live and work — which, in turn, could hinder the ability of all businesses in Michigan, including mine, to recruit and retain a talented workforce. As managing partner of our Detroit office, I am often asked when interviewing potential young attorneys from desired out of state law schools about the State's commitment to protect the civil rights of all citizens. Most often these questions come from non-LGBT individuals who see LGBT civil rights protections as a litmus test for the civility of life in Michigan more generally. These talented individuals have many options and this legislation, if passed, would make Michigan a much less desirable option.

As you and members of the Judiciary committee consider SB 0004, I ask that you ensure that neither the RFRA nor any other Michigan law be allowed to be used to justify discrimination based upon sexual orientation, gender identity or expression.

I appreciate your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,



Thomas P. Wilczak, Esq.

cc: Governor Rick Snyder (via facsimile)
Senator Steve Bieda (via email)
Senator Patrick Colbeck (via email)
Senator Tory Rocca (via facsimile)
Senator Tonya Schuitmaker (via facsimile)